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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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REPORT

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A report containing information on the 1st (Warsaw) Fighter Regiment, dated 1955-1956

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1. The 1st Fighter Regiment (Pierwszy Pulc Lotnictwa Mysliwskiego W-Wa), generally known as the "Warsaw Regiment", was stationed at the Warsaw/Boernerowo airfield [REDACTED] The 1st, 13th, and 31st Fighter Regiments made up an air division which was assigned to the defense of Warsaw. The 1st and 31st Regiments and divisional headquarters were located at the Warsaw/Boernerowo airfield, and the 13th Regiment was stationed at an airfield near Lodz, although there was some talk in November 1956 that the 13th Regiment would be moved to Laski, near Warsaw.

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25X1

SECRET

25X1

-2-

2. The 1st and 31st Regiments were equipped with MIG-15 bis aircraft.¹ An independent squadron (Samodzielna Eskadra) equipped with 14-17 MIG-17s was also stationed at the Warsaw/Boernerowo airfield. This squadron was reserved for special assignments and was directly subordinate to the Air Force Command.
3. The MIG-17s were on duty at night, and four aircraft were kept in a constant state of alert on the runway from dusk to dawn. Two MIG-15 bis and four MIG-17s were on alert status during the day. At night the MIG-17s were on Status 2 (Gotowosc-2) - pilots and ground crews in a special building near the aircraft, and the MIG-15 bis were on Status 3 - pilots at home and ground crews in the barracks. From dawn to dusk, the MIG-15 bis were on Status 2 and the MIG-17s were on Status 3. During certain phases of training or when enemy ⁱⁿ planes were reported with/the Polish borders, all duty aircraft were placed on Status 1 - pilots in the aircraft and ground crews standing by the aircraft.
4. The 1st Fighter Regiment consisted of three squadrons, two operational and one for training.² It had a total of 36 MIG-15 bis aircraft and no reserves, although several YAK-type aircraft were kept in the hangars. The regimental commander's plane formed part of the first squadron.

25X1

SECRET

25X1

-3-

5. MIG-15 bis pilots were rated 1, 2, or 3 in proficiency. Class 3, the lowest, consisted of pilots who had completed a three-year course at a flying school and who had been assigned to an operational unit. They had to serve at least one year in the training squadron of the unit before becoming eligible for Class 2; however, a Class 3 pilot might have to remain in Class 3 for five years before being moved to Class 2. When a pilot had been classified upward, he received a promotion in rank after passing certain examinations given by his unit. The procedure for moving from Class 2 to Class 1 was similar.
6. Senior pilots (Class 1 and 2) made three to four flights weekly, one of which was at night, while junior pilots (Class 3) flew more frequently. Aircraft were usually flown in flights of four, similar to that used in the West.³ Aircraft control during training periods was handled from a large truck (Buda Startowa), which was stationed approximately 50 meters from the center of the runway and which was in contact with the command tower.
7. Each military airfield reportedly had a reserve landing strip (Lotniska Polowe) which was not used in peacetime. The reserve strips were rumored to consist of a single concrete runway, camouflaged with a thin layer of sod, and to have no installations.

SECRET

25X1

-4-

8. The ground crew for a MIG-15 bis consisted of a crew chief, a mechanic, and an armorer. The crew chief and the mechanic were non-commissioned officers. The ground crew of each MIG-15 bis flight (Klucze) consisted of a crew chief, a radio technician, an armament technician, an electrician, and an oxygen-system technician. The crew chief was a commissioned officer, and the other four were non-commissioned officers.
9. The ground crew of a MIG-15 bis squadron consisted of five men, whose duties were similar to those of the flight ground crew; however, members of the squadron ground crew were all commissioned officers, and the crew chief was an engineering officer.
10. Maintenance at the regimental level was the responsibility of the regimental engineer and his three engineer assistants for operations, radio, and armaments. Maintenance at the divisional level was similar, except that the divisional engineer was a field-grade officer.
11. Activities of the ground crews organized around lectures, routine after-flight inspections, and pre-flight inspections of aircraft on hardstands and again on the runways. Lectures were usually planned in advance, but they were also held in the hangars when rain and/or frost (-31° C) made flying impossible.

SECRET

25X1

-5-

12. The crew chief had a pre-flight check list which had to be signed by members of the aircraft ground crew, the flight ground crew, the flight engineer, and finally the pilot, who certified that the aircraft was in good order. When the pilot landed, he either entered his comments on the list or simply signed it, and the list was sent to regimental headquarters. Despite the pre-flight examinations, the MIG-15 bis would often return without making the projected flight, usually because of faults in the wheel mechanism, the radio, or other apparatus.
13. The ground crews also made periodic examinations of the fuselage and engine after 25, 50, and 100 flight hours. These examinations were generally made in the hangar and did not require more than a day's time. After 200 flight hours, which was its normal life-span, the MIG-15 bis engine was sent to a repair base for a thorough examination. The repair base for the 1st Regiment was also located at the Warsaw/⁴Boernerowo airfield.

Comments:

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1. There were no MIG-19 aircraft at the field.
2. One of the three squadrons of each fighter regiment is a training squadron.

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25X1

-6-

3. Individual aircraft and flights of two aircraft were occasionally sent up, but flights of three or five aircraft were never sent up.
4. This base also performed repair work for units stationed at other airfields.